

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

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FM AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

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AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

UNCLAS DAMASCUS 4551

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E.O. 11652: N/A

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SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION

1. MEDIA NOTED BEGIN VISIT DRAWING ON WIRE SERVICE REPORTS AND VOA. COMMENTARY FOLLOWED REGULAR MORNING NEWSCAST OF DAMASCUS RADIO TO EFFECT THAT DESPITE OPTIMISM FOLLOWING PRESIDENT CARTER'S STATEMENT AND THOSE BY OTHER RANKING AMERICAN OFFICIALS AND DESPITE ISRAELI PROPAGANDA, "OBSERVORS" FEEL PEACE IS STILL DISTANT. THEY FEAR AMERICAN AND ISRAELI PLANS MAY AIM AT GIVING ISRAEL MORE TIME TO EXECUTE SETTLEMENT PLANS IN OCCUPIED TERRITORIES, BUILD NEW COLINIES, BRING IN MORE IMMIGRANTS AND STRENGTHEN THEMSELVES MILITARILY. RADIO CALLED FOR VIGILANCE.

2. IN COMMENTARY ENTITLED "ARE ONE-SIDED STEPS SUFFICIENT TO REACH PESCE" TISHRINE COLUMNIST JIBRAN KOURIYYE CALLED RUMOURED BEGIN MAP "MEW ELEMENT IN ISRAELI UNCLASSIFIED

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PAGE 02 DAMASC 04551 191516Z

POLICY" WHICH MIGHT BE "AMOUNG PRESSURES BROUGHT TO BEAR ON ARABS TO FORCE MORE YIELDING BY THEM." REITERATED BIEW THAT SYRIA HAS ACTIVELY PURSUED PEACE.

3. QUOTE. SYRIA ACTIVELY PARTICIPATED IN ARAB PEACE PUSH THAT STARTED INTERNATIONAL PEACE EFFORTS AND HAS COOPERATED WITH ALL PARTIES WHICH SHOWS DESIRE TO

HELP MOVEMENT TOWARDS PESCE. SYRIA HAS SHOWN DURING ALL STAGES THAT IT REALLY WANTS PEACE AND IS COOPERATION FULLY TO THAT END. BUT IT WILL NOT AT SAME TIME DEPART FROM ITS BASIC POSITION, ITS ADHERENCE TO UN RESOLUTIONS AND TWO CONDITIONS OF PEACE - WITHDRAWAL AND RIGHTS. ALL EFFORTS IN PAST HAVE FAILED AND WILL FAIL IN FUTURE TO MAKE SYRIA SURRENDER CARD A FROM ITS HAND OR PUT CASE IN HANDS OF OTHERS BESIDE ARAB ONES. NOR WILL SYRIA YIESL ARAB RIGHTS OR UNDERTAKE TO SURRENDER IN AMTTERS THAT ARE THE ESSENCE OF SOVEREIGNTY AND INDEPENDENCE. END PUOTE.

4. AL-BAATH COLUMNIST ASSAD BOEID IN "BEFORE PROPOSED GENEVA CONFERENCE, BRZENSKI KICKS BALL INTO ARAB LAPS" DISCUSSED SPLIT BETWEEN ARAB AND ISRAELI VIEWS ON INCLUSION OF PLAESTINIANS AT GENEVA. COMMENTED ON BRZEZINSKE. QUOTE. LET US LOOK FOR UNDERSTANDING IN BRZEZINSKI'S STATEEMTN. HE SAYS, "ARAB COUNTRIES SHOULD SOLVE PROBLEM OF PLAESTINIAN STATE FIRST BEFORE OFFERING IT TO ISRAEL." WHAT DO WE UNDERSTAND FROM THIS? THE THING TO BE UNDERSTOOD IS THAT HE (BRZEZINSKI) DOES NOT THINK THAT ARABS ARE IN AGREEMENT ON FORM OF PALESTINIAN STATE. THEREFORE HE IS KICKIMG BALL INTO ARAB LAPS AND WANTS ENTIRE WORLD INCLUDING EUROPE AND USSR TO SEE THAT ARABS ARE ASKING FOR SOMETHING ON WHICH THEY DISAGREE AMONG THEMSELVES. THIS IS ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT POINTS OF AMERICAN UNCLASSIFIED

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PAGE 03 DAMASC 04551 191516Z

STRATEGY. SPLITTING THE ARABS WAS, AND STILL IS, THE MOST IMPORTANT GOAL OF AMERICAN STRATEGY AND ARAB SOLIDARITY IS MEANT TO BE IN RHETORIC AND NOT IN ACTION.
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